

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (original) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus for suppressing acoustic feedback, comprising:

sound signal inputting means for inputting sound signals from a plurality of signal paths;

filtering means for filtering out acoustic feedback components from said sound signals;

signal path identifying means for identifying said signal paths having said acoustic feedback caused thereon after converting each of said sound signals into digital data with a first number of data samples; and

filter coefficient specifying means for specifying filter coefficients of said filtering means after adding said sound signals respectively inputted from said signal paths and converting into digital data with a second number of data samples, wherein

the second number of data samples is larger than the first number of data samples, and

said filtering means is adapted to filter on the basis of said filter coefficients specified by said filter coefficient specifying means out said acoustic feedback components on said signal paths identified by said signal path identifying means.

Claim 2 (original) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising

acoustic feedback characteristic comparing means for comparing characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said first number of data samples with characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said second number of data samples,

said signal path identifying means being adapted to identify said signal paths having said acoustic feedback caused thereon based on the result of the comparison made by said acoustic feedback characteristic comparing means.

Claim 3 (original) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus as set forth in claim 2, in

which

said acoustic feedback characteristic comparing means is adapted to convert said digital data with said second number of data samples into digital data with said first number of data samples to compare said characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said first number of data samples with said characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said second number of data samples.

Claim 4 (original) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3, in which

the number of said signal path identifying means is smaller than the number of said signal paths.

Claim 5 (currently amended) An acoustic feedback suppression method, comprising the steps of:

~~adding sound signals respectively inputted from a plurality of signal paths;~~  
~~judging whether or not acoustic feedback is caused in the added sound signal;~~  
~~judging whether or not said acoustic feedback is caused in each of said sound signals~~  
respectively filtering out, by a filter unit, acoustic feedback components from said sound signals  
inputted from a plurality of said signal paths when said acoustic feedback is judged to be caused in  
said added sound signal;  
~~calculating filter coefficients for each of said sound signals having said acoustic feedback~~  
~~judged to be caused therein; and~~  
~~suppressing said acoustic feedback on the basis of said filter coefficients calculated~~  
identifying said signal paths having said acoustic feedback caused thereon after converting  
each of said sound signals into digital data with a first number of data samples; and  
specifying filter coefficients of said filters after adding said sound signals respectively  
inputted from said signal paths and converting into digital data with a second number of data  
samples, wherein  
the second number of data samples is larger than the first number of data samples, and  
said filter unit is operated to filter on the basis of said specified filter coefficients out said  
acoustic feedback components on said identified signal paths.

Claim 6 (new) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus for suppressing acoustic feedback, comprising:

- a sound signal input for inputting sound signals from a plurality of signal paths;
- a filter for filtering out acoustic feedback components from said sound signals;
- a signal path detector for identifying said signal paths having said acoustic feedback caused thereon after converting each of said sound signals into digital data with a first number of data samples; and
- a filter coefficient calculator for specifying filter coefficients of said filter after adding said sound signals respectively inputted from said signal paths and converting into digital data with a second number of data samples, wherein
  - the second number of data samples is larger than the first number of data samples, and
  - said filter is adapted to filter on the basis of said filter coefficients specified by said filter coefficient calculator out said acoustic feedback components on said signal paths identified by said signal path detector.

Claim 7 (new) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus as set forth in claim 6, further comprising

- acoustic feedback characteristic comparator for comparing characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said first number of data samples with characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said second number of data samples,
- said signal path detector being adapted to identify said signal paths having said acoustic feedback caused thereon based on the result of the comparison made by said acoustic feedback characteristic comparator.

Claim 8 (new) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus as set forth in claim 7, in which  
said acoustic feedback characteristic comparator is adapted to convert said digital data with said second number of data samples into digital data with said first number of data samples to compare said characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said first number of data samples with said characteristics of said acoustic feedback components converted into said digital data with said second number of data samples.

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Claim 9 (new) An acoustic feedback suppression apparatus as set forth in any one of claims 6 to 8, in which  
the number of said signal path detectors is smaller than the number of said signal paths.